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Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5813rd meeting

Friday, 21 December 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Spatafora	(Italy)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (S/2007/704)

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07-65497 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (S/2007/704)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pemagbi (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/748, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Members also have before them document S/2007/704, which contains the fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1793 (2007).

I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Pemagbi (Sierra Leone): Mr. President, I should first of all thank you and the other members of the Council for giving my delegation the opportunity to say a few words in connection with the final extension of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL). Today's decision marks yet another important phase in the process of peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. It comes only nine days after the adoption by the Peacebuilding Commission of a Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework for Sierra Leone.

As UNIOSIL prepares its exit or completion strategy, we recall the departure of the Organization's operations under the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) exactly two years ago, after the successful completion of its peacekeeping mission. In the next several months, the Security Council is expected to authorize the establishment of yet another type of office in the country.

All these developments suggest at least two things. First, in spite of many seemingly insurmountable challenges, Sierra Leone has made and continues to make remarkable progress in the consolidation of peace after a devastating 11-year armed conflict. Secondly, the United Nations has not abandoned Sierra Leone, and it is thus prepared to adapt its post-conflict presence and mandate in response to the emerging situation in the country.

In this regard, we are grateful to the Security Council for responding positively to President Koroma's request for the extension of the presence of UNIOSIL as currently structured, and also to the recommendation of the Secretary-General for a new office to replace UNIOSIL at the end of September 2008. In his letter to the Secretary-General of 22 October 2007 (S/2007/659, annex), President Koroma acknowledged the important role that UNIOSIL has played during the past two years in the consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone. My delegation joins the Security

Council in commending what the Council rightly describes as the valuable contribution that the Office has made to Sierra Leone's recovery from conflict and to the country's peace, security and development.

We welcome the fact that the Council has emphasized the importance of UNIOSIL providing assistance to national commissions and institutions in fulfilling their respective responsibilities. We already have a relatively large number of such bodies for elections; the promotion of good governance and accountability; combating corruption; the promotion of human rights, including the rights of the child; and constitutional review. They should be seen in the context of national ownership. They are an integral part of the structure of peacebuilding and sustainable development.

Accordingly, there is an urgent need to support and strengthen them. We note with satisfaction that the Council has requested the Secretary-General to ensure that there is adequate capacity, expertise and resources within UNIOSIL to assist the various commissions and institutions.

Of course, the Government acknowledges that it bears primary responsibility for peacebuilding and long-term development in the country. We would therefore like to reiterate that the Government, bearing in mind the mandate it received in the recent national elections, is determined to intensify its effort to ensure that the people of Sierra Leone see and enjoy the dividends of peace within the shortest possible time. We continue to count on the support of the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations system and bilateral and multi-national partners in fulfilling this objective.

The President: There are no other speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage .of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.